

Compression Garments

Compression garments play a very important role in helping you to manage your lymphoedema and continue living independently.

The role of the Compression Garment:

The garments work by:

- Limiting the build-up of lymph fluid.
- Provides a firm encasement for the muscles to work against.
- Increasing the pressure in the tissues and encourage the fluid to drain back into the lymphatic system.
- They encourage the fluid to move to an area that is draining well.
- Reduces the risk of an AIE.

Applying the Garment:

When you're fitted for your compression garment you will be shown how to put on and remove the garment. Here are some useful suggestions:

- Put your garment on first thing in the morning when the limb is at its smallest. It is best not to put it on straight after a shower or bath as dampness can make it difficult to put on.
- Start by turning the stocking or sleeve inside out as far as the wrist or heel part. Pull the garment over your hand or foot and ease it up, a bit at a time. Make sure you don't pull it up by the top of the garment.
- Do not turn or roll the top over – this will restrict the blood flow and cause more swelling.
- If you have lymphoedema in your arm, wearing a rubber glove on your unaffected hand may help when putting your compression garment on.
- Applying a little un-perfumed talc to your arm or leg can help to ease the garment on. There are different aids available to help put garments on and to take them off.
- Make sure the material is spread evenly and there are no wrinkles or creases when your garment is on. Wearing a rubber glove on the unaffected hand can help you smooth the garment out.
- Moisturise your skin at night after you've taken off your garment rather than in the morning, because cream makes the sleeve or stocking difficult to put on.

Wearing the Compression Garment:

- To get the best results you will need to wear your sleeve all day everyday
- The sleeves have a high working pressure so are most effective when you are active – you should always wear these when active.
- You are entitled to two garments on prescription so you can wash one and wear one.

Care of the Garment:

- Wash up to 40 degrees or hand wash
- Do not tumble dry
- Do not iron
- Before washing garment thoroughly wash the silicone band

When not to apply the Compression Garment:

- Remove if you have an AIE and only reapply
- Remove if you: - Experience any numbness
 - Pins and needles
 - Persistent pain
 - Your fingers or toes change colour
- Contact your therapist if you experience any weeping through garments